

REMARKS

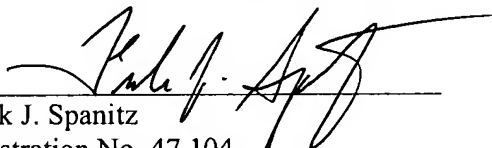
This preliminary amendment and election responds to the office action mailed August 22, 2006. Applicants hereby elect without traverse Species A under method (block geometry), second geometry (pellet), and insertion space (spinal cage) for continued prosecution, as identified by the Examiner. Claims 18-20 have been canceled. Claims 1, 9, 12, and 14-17 have been amended. New claims 21-40 have been added. These new claims are fully supported by the original disclosure. No new matter has been introduced. Claims 3-6 and 8 have been withdrawn; however, Applicants reserve the right to have these claims reinstated upon the allowance of a generic claim from which they depend or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowable generic claim. Claims 1, 2, 7, 9-17, and 21-40 are readable on the elected species and remain pending in this application after entry of this preliminary amendment for prosecution on merits.

The Applicant respectfully requests entry of the foregoing amendments and remarks into the record, and favorable consideration thereof by the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: September 12, 2006

By: _____


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